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What I Wrote About Iran's Strategy in the Gulf — Three Years Before the Arab Spring

By Dhafer Al-Zayani — January 14, 2008

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In January 2008, I sat down and wrote a warning.

Not a political speech.

Not a slogan.

A structured analysis.

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Three years before the streets erupted.

Three years before the world discovered what I already saw.

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****National security means three things:****

One: Overcoming yourself.

Two: Overcoming your problems.

Three: Staying ahead of your enemies.

None of these is optional.

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All three must happen simultaneously.

****On overcoming yourself:****

No government can confront a well-funded enemy — one with deep roots in the economy, society, and institutions — using cowards or men of weak character.

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Building anything requires risk.

Defending a nation requires far more.

The leader who cannot say the hard truth at the critical moment is not a leader.

He is an obstacle.

True courage is not the absence of fear.

It is the willingness to dissolve your personal interests into the greater mission.



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****On overcoming problems:****

Governments that fall, fall not because of great catastrophes.

They fall because they stopped in front of small problems
and turned them into walls
instead of bridges.

When Mao's forces reached a dead end in their long march —
eighty rivers, thirty mountain ranges, six thousand miles —
they chose the impossible path.

One hundred thousand began.
Twenty thousand survived.

Those twenty thousand changed history.

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The lesson is not about casualties.

The lesson is this:

****There is always a way. If not on the ground, then underground. If not underground, then through the sky.****

****On staying ahead of your enemies:****

In 2008, I wrote what few wanted to hear:

The threat is not coming with weapons.
It is coming through data.

Through the civil servant who has access to government
servers.

Through the lawyer who sits in the prosecutor's office.
Through the accountant who manages the national budget.

I named it clearly:

In Bahrain, key ministries had been quietly penetrated.
Health. Commerce. Justice. Banking.
The digital infrastructure connecting them all.

In Kuwait, the threat had reached military institutions.
In the UAE, economic dominance over Dubai was already a reality.
In Qatar, regional coordination cells operated under the cover of
charitable gatherings.

These were not accusations.

These were observations.

Written in 2008.

Verified by history.

****The science of security has changed.****

Security is no longer just keeping secrets.

It requires:

- Crowd psychology

- Information warfare

- Data analysis

- Preemptive intelligence

The enemy studied these sciences.

Applied them systematically.

While some governments still relied on memory, intuition, and old files.

****A nation that fights a modern enemy with outdated tools
has already lost half the battle.****

****What I was asking for in 2008:****

Not weapons.

Not armies.

I was asking for ****awareness****.

Awareness that the real battlefield is inside institutions.

Inside education ministries.

Inside courtrooms.

Inside the data that moves silently between government servers at
night.

I was asking governments to count:

How many loyal young men do we have?

How many infiltrators are in our ranks?

What is their hierarchy?

What are their plans?

****Numbers don't lie. Memory does.****

****A final word:****

I wrote this in January 2008.

Some read it.

Most ignored it.

Three years later, the streets spoke.

I am not writing this to say: ***I told you so.***

I am writing this so that the next generation understands:

The warning was there.

In writing.

With a date.

****The question was never whether the threat was real.****

****The question was whether anyone was listening.****

Dhafer Hamad Al-Zayani

Bahrain

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<https://zayani1.blogspot.com/2008/01/1.html?m=1>

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